

MANUAL OF SAINT GERARD

THE MOTHERS' SAINT
ST. GERARD MAJELLA
REDEMPTORIST BROTHER

Feast—16th October

PART I—Devotions to St. Gerard.

PART II—Devotions to Our Mother of Perpetual Succour.

PART I

Foreword

Catholic mothers everywhere are now cultivating greater devotion to St. Gerard Majella—the mothers' saint. As prayer leaflets too quickly and too easily wear out, we now offer the clients of St. Gerard this little manual. It contains prayers and devotions to meet every case.

St. Gerard had a tender love for God's Mother. Hand in hand with devotion to him, therefore, should go a tender devotion to Mary, the Mother of God and the spiritual Mother of mankind. And so we have included in this booklet some beautiful prayers to our Mother of Perpetual Succour which we strongly recommend to all. To those who show themselves her devoted children, Mary in return will show herself to be a loving, a tender, a powerful Mother—a Mother of Perpetual Succour.

Life of St. Gerard

Gerard Majella was born at Muro, in Southern Italy, April 6, 1726. His parents were an ordinary, hard-working couple, rich only in their faith. So delicate was the new-comer at his birth that he had to be baptized immediately. However, instead of going to join the angels, he survived to spend a short life as an angel on earth.

Divine favours were lavished on Gerard even during childhood. For instance, the Infant Jesus often came to play with him; and it was the great Archangel St. Michael, who miraculously gave him his first Holy Communion.

At the age of twelve, owing to the death of his father, Gerard had to become the bread-winner for his mother and three sisters. He followed his father's trade—tailoring. As an apprentice-tailor and later as a bishop's valet he had to put up with a lot of harsh treatment. But he bore it all with heroic fortitude and without complaint.

On the death of the bishop Gerard opened a tailoring business of his own. But he was not meant for the business of this world. God was calling him. Twice he applied to become a Capuchin. Each time he was rejected on account of his frail health. Then the Redemptorist Fathers came to preach a mission at Muro. He stormed them with his entreaties to become a lay-brother. In vain.

Knowing that he would follow the Fathers as he had threatened to do, his mother, when the time for their departure came, locked him in his room. He escaped through the window and left a brief note, "I have gone to become a saint."

On overtaking the fathers, the argument started all over again. At last in sheer desperation the superior of the missionaries sent him to the Novitiate House with the covering note, "I send you a useless brother."

Gerard proved those unflattering credentials to be hopelessly wrong. Far from being useless he actually did the work of several. He was made for the religious life; so much so that his period of probation was shortened.

He spent only six years in religion. But how glorious they were! By his penances, his humility, his obedience, he showed himself a true disciple of his Crucified Master. When accompanying the Fathers on missions he outstripped them all in his zeal for souls. His life was one big prayer—one long act of ardent love for Jesus and Mary.

Little wonder, then, that it received the divine stamp of miracles. So numerous and outstanding were the prodigies performed by Gerard that people called him the "wonder-worker." In particular, he had the gift of reading consciences and by the startling revelations that he made to people of their own secret sins, he induced many to obtain forgiveness by a good confession. Many a sick child, many a poor little cripple, he cured merely by a command. Several cases are recorded of miraculous help given to expectant mothers who were in grave danger. So enormously did this particular kind of favour multiply after his death that he became known as "The Saint of a Happy Delivery."

Gerard died at midnight, October 15, 1755, aged twenty-nine years and six months. He was canonized by Pope Pius X, December 11, 1904, and October 16 was fixed as his feast.

From his place in heaven our saint is still a wonder-worker: more so than ever, for he now has the whole world as the theatre of his operations. His faithful clients everywhere cannot find words to express their gratitude to their heavenly intercessor and patron.

Because of the difficulties he experienced in following his own vocation, he is invoked as the Patron of Vocations. Because of his gift of reading the consciences of others he is hailed as the Patron of a Good Confession. And because of the special protection he gives to expectant mothers and to sick children he is acclaimed throughout the world as the Patron of Mothers—the Mothers' Saint.

1.-SPECIAL PRAYERS

For Motherhood

O Good St. Gerard, powerful intercessor with God. and Wonder-worker of our day, I call upon thee and seek thine aid.

Thou who didst always fulfil God's designs, help me to do the Holy Will of God. Beseech the Master of Life from Whom all paternity proceeds to render me fruitful in offspring, that I may raise up children to God in this life and heirs to the Kingdom of His Glory in the world to come. Amen.

For an Expectant Mother

O everlasting and Almighty God, Who through the operation of the Holy Ghost didst prepare the body and soul of the glorious Virgin Mary to be the worthy dwelling of Thy Son, and through the same Holy Ghost didst sanctify St. John the Baptist before his birth: listen to the prayer of Thy humble servant who implores Thee through the merits and intercession of St. Gerard Majella, to protect me (her) in the dangers of Motherhood and to safeguard against the evil spirit the child whom Thou hast vouchsafed to grant me (her), so that by Thy saving hand it may receive Holy Baptism. Grant, also, that after living as good Christians in Thy love and service here on earth, both mother and child may attain to everlasting happiness in Heaven. Amen.

For a Sick Child

Good St. Gerard who, like our Divine Saviour, didst show children such loving tenderness and didst deliver so many from various diseases and even from death: graciously look down upon distressed parents who implore thee to restore their child's health (if such be the Will of God), promising to bring it up a good Christian and to safeguard it by constant vigilance from the leprosy of sin. We implore this favour, O compassionate Brother, through that early love with which Jesus and Mary surrounded thy childhood. Amen.

In Time of Trial

O Sainted Brother Gerard, whose heart went out to the unfortunate; who relieved so many poor, healed so many sick, comforted so many afflicted; behold me worried and troubled as I kneel at thy feet. In vain do I turn to men to seek consolation and help; therefore, do I have recourse to thee who art so powerful in heaven. Graciously assist me, St. Gerard, that being freed from this trial or strengthened to bear it for the love of God, I may praise and thank God and serve Him with greater love and fervour. Amen.

In Temporal Needs

O God, Who didst so often give to St. Gerard power to supply the needs of the poor, grant us the grace which we implore of Thee (here mention your need), through the intercession of Thy most charitable Servant, that being helped in our present need, we may with our whole heart love and serve Thee, our only Treasure in time and eternity. Amen.

For Mothers

O good and gracious St. Gerard, invoked throughout the world as the Mothers' Saint, well dost thou know the joys

and sorrows, the fears and longings of a Mother's heart. Look down with tenderness, we beseech thee, upon all Mothers. Wipe away their tears and cheer them with radiant hope. Shield their virtue from the corrupt influence of a pagan world. Keep them true to the example of Mary, the model of Mothers. Obtain for them the graces of their noble state in life, that by bringing up their children in the fear and love of God they may deserve to have those same children for their everlasting joy and crown. Amen.

For Good Health

O God, Who didst bestow on St. Gerard the power of healing all kinds of infirmities, deign to glorify Thy Servant, who was so merciful toward human misery, by delivering me from my present sickness. Grant also that, being strengthened in body, I may take greater care to avoid sin and overcome my evil passions, the spiritual diseases that drag so many to everlasting death. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

For Your Family

O glorious St. Gerard, entrusted by God with the special protection of mothers and their children, I confidently invoke thy powerful intercession for myself and my family-strengthen us to carry our daily Cross, fly to our aid in every danger to soul and body, gladden our Home with the blessings of divine peace, and grant that by the faithful practice of our Holy Religion in this world, we may all merit to be reunited around God's Throne in Heaven for ever and ever. Amen.

Against the Forces of Anti-Life

O Great Wonder-worker of our day, St. Gerard, powerful protector of the mother and her unborn child, beg God, we beseech thee, to crush the mounting forces of anti-life; and to enlighten those who walk in this deadly way that they may see the enormity of their sin and return to the generous observance of the divine law. Pray, too, for mothers that they may prize the great privilege of motherhood and that they may bring up their children in the holy love and fear of God; thereby saving their own immortal souls and furthering the honour and glory of their Maker, through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer to St. Gerard

O Almighty and Everlasting God, Who didst draw to Thyself St. Gerard even from his tenderest years, making him conformable to the Image of Thy Crucified Son, grant, we beseech Thee, that imitating his example we may be made like unto the same Divine Image, through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

For the Conversion of a Sinner

St. Gerard, who though never raised to the dignity of the priesthood, didst nevertheless labour with apostolic zeal for the conversion of souls; pray, I beseech thee, for N.N., whose soul is so dear to me. Grant him the grace of a sincere conversion, that he may leave for ever the road that leads to perdition.

Remember all that Jesus Christ suffered to redeem his immortal soul. Let not Our Lord's merits be lost for him. Let not Satan hold him in bondage any longer. Release his soul from the power of the devil and restore it to Jesus, its true Lord and Master. Hear me, I beseech thee, and for this intention, offer up to Christ His own sufferings together with those of Mary, His Immaculate Mother. Amen.

For One in the Forces

O most powerful St. Gerard, who wast a good soldier of Christ and didst fight manfully in the battle of life, give courage to my son (or brother, or husband) in the present war. Protect his morals from corruption: preserve his Faith in the midst of infidelity. Let him always uphold the honour of his family and of his Church, whose standard-bearer he is. True to God and country, may he prove a valiant soldier and may he return to us without harm. Through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

For a Family in Discord

St. Gerard, who, by your sweet persuasion, brought peace and harmony to families divided by discord, cast your eyes upon my poor family so disunited and profoundly upset. Bring back to us concord and Christian charity, and give us the courage to make the necessary sacrifices, that living together in the fear and love of God, we may enjoy the happiness promised on earth to men of good will. Amen.

Ejaculation—St. Gerard, pity my family and form us into one heart and one soul.

For a Good Confession

O St. Gerard, Patron of a Good Confession, thou who gavest courage to souls whom fear and shame had overcome; thou who gavest sorrow to their hearts, resolution to their wills, truth to their faltering lips, help me to make a good confession. Help me to know my sins, to be truly sorry for them, to be firmly resolved, with God's grace, never to sin again. Help me to confess my sins humbly and sincerely, to confess them in the spirit of faith, as confessing them to Our Lord Himself. Stand by me in this confession, O Gentle Saint—an Angel of God sent to free me from sin. Amen.

Thanks to St. Gerard

O God, the Giver of all good gifts, I acknowledge that I am unworthy to receive anything from Thy hand. But through the intercession of St. Gerard Thou hast deigned to hear my prayer. Therefore, to Thee and to him I render thanks for the favour granted. In token of my gratitude I will strive to promote Thy glory and the glory of Thy servant. Through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

For Religious and Priestly Vocations

O Good St. Gerard, powerful intercessor with God, and Wonder-worker of our day, I invoke thee as the Mothers' Saint, and as Patron of Vocations, to obtain for my dear child (here mention the child's name) a Religious Vocation. O thou who art so powerful in helping mothers, intercede, I beseech thee, that this sublime gift may crown and sanctify my motherhood. O thou who in life led so many to the Religious Life by thy saintly example and wise counsel; thou who art today invoked as Patron of Vocations, make me ever mindful of our Dear Saviour's words: "The harvest indeed is great, but the labourers are few. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that He send labourers into His harvest."

With resignation to God's Will, and confidence in thine intercession, O Dear St. Gerard, I place the future Vocation of my child in thy hands. Obtain for me the grace that by a virtuous life I may sanctify and prepare my child for wholehearted consecration in the service of God, or that my dear son may be worthy of the divine call to the Priesthood. There is nothing dearer to my heart than that I offer back to God, in the Religious Life, or in the sublime dignity of the Priesthood, the precious treasure He has entrusted to me. With God's grace I gladly accept all the sacrifices that may be asked of me. I freely embrace the crosses inseparable from a life of piety and virtue; I cheerfully face the toil and weariness needed to provide material means; I count not the cost of the sadness of parting; I fear not the loneliness of separation. I confidently trust that the grace of God will make sacrifice my strength, and sorrow my greatest joy. O Dear St. Gerard, hear this, a mother's prayer, and by thine intercession obtain for God another labourer in His harvest, sanctify my child and crown my motherhood. Amen.

2.-NOVENA

1st Day.-St. Gerard ever full of faith, obtain for me that, believing firmly all that the Church of God proposes to my belief, I may strive to secure through a holy life the joys of eternal happiness.

Say nine Hail Marys. And then

V. Pray for us, O St. Gerard.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let Us Pray

O Almighty and Everlasting God, Who didst draw to Thyself Saint Gerard, even from his tenderest years, making him conformable to the image of Thy Crucified Son, grant, we beseech Thee, that imitating his example we may be

made like unto the same Divine Image, through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

2nd Day.-St. Gerard, most generous saint, who from thy tenderest years didst care so little for the goods of earth, grant that I may place all my confidence in Jesus Christ, my true Treasure, Who alone can make me happy in time and in eternity.

Nine Hail Marys, etc., as on 1st day.

3rd Day.- Saint Gerard, bright seraph of love, who despising all earthly love, didst consecrate thy life to the service of God and thy neighbour, promoting God's glory in thy lowly state, and ever ready to assist the distressed and console the sorrowful, obtain for me, I beseech thee, that loving God the only Good and my neighbour for His sake, I may be hereafter united to Him for ever in glory.

Nine Hail Marys, etc., as on 1st day.

4th Day.-Saint Gerard, spotless lily of purity, by thy angelic virtue and thy wonderful innocence of life thou didst receive from the Infant Jesus and His Immaculate Mother sweet pledges of tenderest love, grant, I beseech thee, that I may ever strive manfully in my life-long fight, and thus win the crown that awaits the brave and the true.

Nine Hail Marys, etc., as on 1st day.

5th Day.-Saint Gerard, model of holy obedience, who through thy life didst heroically submit thy judgment to those who represented Jesus Christ to thee, thus sanctifying thy lowliest actions, obtain for me from God cheerful submission to His Holy Will and the virtue of perfect obedience, that I may be made conformable to Jesus, my Model, Who was obedient even to death.

Nine Hail Marys, etc., as on 1st day.

6th Day.-Saint Gerard, most perfect imitator of Jesus Our Redeemer, do thou whose greatest glory was to be humble and lowly, obtain that I, too, knowing my littleness in God's sight, may be found worthy to enter the kingdom that is promised to the humble and lowly of heart.

Nine Hail Marys, etc., as on 1st day.

7th Day.-Saint Gerard, unconquered hero, most patient in suffering, do thou who didst glory in infirmity and under slander and most cruel ignominy didst rejoice to suffer with Christ, obtain for me patience and resignation in my sorrows that I may bravely bear the cross that is to gain for me the crown of everlasting glory.

Nine Hail Marys, etc., as on 1st day.

8th Day.-Saint Gerard, true lover of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, do thou who didst kneel long hours before the Tabernacle, and there didst taste the joys of Paradise, obtain for me, I beseech thee, the spirit of prayer and an undying love for the Most Holy Sacrament, that thus receiving frequently the Body and Blood of Jesus, I may daily grow in His holy love and merit the priceless grace of loving Him even to the end.

Nine Hail Marys, etc., as on 1st day.

9th Day.-Saint Gerard, most favoured child of heaven, to whom Mary gave the infant Jesus in the days of thy childhood and to whom she sweetly came before thou didst close thine eyes in death, obtain for me, I beseech thee, so to seek and love my Blessed Mother during life, that she may be my joy and consolation in this valley of tears, until with thee before the throne of God, I may praise her goodness for all eternity. Amen.

Nine Hail Marys, etc., as on 1st day.

3.-LITANY OF ST. GERARD
(For Private Use)

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us.

God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.

God, the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, Mother of Perpetual Succour, pray for us.

St. Joseph, Foster-father of Christ, pray for us.

St. Alphonsus, Founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, pray for us.

St. Gerard, endowed with extraordinary graces from early childhood, pray for us.

St. Gerard, perfect type of a faithful servant, pray for us.

St. Gerard, shining example of the labouring classes, pray for us.

St. Gerard, great lover of prayer and work, pray for us.

St. Gerard, seraphic adorer of the most Blessed Sacrament, pray for us.

St. Gerard, living image of the Crucified Saviour, pray for us.

St. Gerard, most devoted client of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, pray for us.

St. Gerard, bright mirror of innocence and penance, pray for us.

St. Gerard, silent victim of ignominious calumny, pray for us.

St. Gerard, great before God by thy deep humility, pray for us.

St. Gerard, truly wise by thy child-like simplicity, pray for us.

St. Gerard, supernaturally enlightened in divine mysteries, pray for us.

St. Gerard, solely desirous of pleasing God, pray for us.

St. Gerard, zealous promoter of the conversion of sinners, pray for us.

St. Gerard, wise counsellor in the choice of vocation, pray for us.

St. Gerard, enlightened guide in the direction of souls, pray for us.

St. Gerard, kind friend of the poor and distressed, pray for us.

St. Gerard, safe refuge in sickness and sorrow, pray for us.

St. Gerard, wonderful protector of unbaptized children, pray for us.

St. Gerard, compassionate intercessor in all our wants, pray for us.

St. Gerard, exalted by God through astonishing miracles, pray for us.

St. Gerard, ornament and glory of the Redemptorist Order, pray for us.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world. Spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world. Graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world. Have mercy on us.

V. Pray for us, St. Gerard.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let Us Pray

O God, who didst deign to draw St. Gerard unto Thyself from his youth, and to make him conformable to the image of Thy Crucified Son: grant, we beseech Thee, that following his example we may be transformed into the same Divine Image. Through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. R. Amen.

4.-PETITION TO ST. GERARD

Dear St. Gerard, by your influence, help, graces and innumerable acts of kindness, you have drawn countless hearts

to yourself; you have become the comforter of the afflicted, the relief of the poor, and the angel of health for the infirm. You bring tears of consolation to your devout clients and attract the enthusiastic interest of whole nations. Grant that I may not be so unfortunate as to call upon you and not be heard.

Read my heart! See how much I suffer! Look into my conscience, my soul, and heal me. Comfort me! Console me! You well know what misfortune weighs me down! What evil afflicts me! How can you see my grief and sorrow without being moved to pity me, Gerard! Come quickly to my assistance, Gerard! Enrol me among the number of those who thank and praise you! Place your name always on my lips! When you listen to and console me you shall also receive the praises and thanks of those who love and care for me! What will it cost to cure me? I shall not silence my appeal to you until you have fully answered my prayers. It is true that I do not deserve your favours, but hear me for the love you bear to Jesus and Mary.

St. Gerard, whose holiness, goodness and marvellous power have implanted this abundant confidence in my heart-
Pray for me, my holy Protector.

That I may be victorious in my struggle with the devil, the world and my sinful passions.

Pray for me, my holy Protector.

That I may regain the liberty of the children of God from the habit of sin which is rooted in my soul, and places upon me its shameful yoke.

Pray for me, my holy Protector.

That henceforth I may confess my sins and receive Our Lord worthily, if in the past, I have had the misfortune to abuse the sacraments of penance and Holy Communion.

Pray for me, my holy Protector.

That in future I may remain faithful to my Christian duties, if I have been remiss in the service of God-neglecting my prayers, the holy Mass and the sacraments.

Pray for me, my holy Protector.

That I may forgive, forget and reward all evil done to me if I have been the victim of injustice, calumny, vexation and ill-treatment by others.

Pray for me, my holy Protector.

That I may endure with Christian resignation the trials of life: sickness, affliction, failures, reversal of fortune.

Pray for me, my holy Protector.

That for the love of God, I may faithfully discharge all the duties of my condition in life.

Pray for me, my holy Protector.

That I may practise the virtues of the elect: humility, charity, mortification, obedience and complete resignation to the will of God.

Pray for me, my holy Protector.

That your exemplary zeal may urge me on to labour courageously for the salvation of others.

Pray for me, my holy Protector.

That I may die in the grace and friendship of God, and assisted by Jesus and Mary.

Pray for me, my holy Protector.

V. Pray for us, O holy St. Gerard.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let Us Pray

O Almighty and Everlasting God, Who didst draw to Thyself St. Gerard even from his tenderest years, making him conformable to the Image of Thy Crucified Son, grant we beseech Thee, that imitating his example we may be made like unto the same Divine Image, through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

PART II
Mother of Perpetual Succour
Feast Day:
In Redemptorist Churches, Sunday before June 24.
In other Churches, June 27.

THE MIRACULOUS PICTURE OF OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL SUCCOUR

The Original Picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour came from the island of Crete in the Eastern Mediterranean. There in the fifteenth century the church in which it was enshrined was famous throughout the land, for to this Image of the Virgin were attributed many miracles. About the year 1492, a merchant, who was a native of the island, stole the picture and took it to Italy. He reached Rome, but soon after was stricken down with a mortal illness. Before his death he requested the friend with whom he was staying to have the image given to some church for the veneration of the people.

This man's wife was loath to part with it. Several times Our Lady appeared to remind him of his promise to the dying merchant. When at last it was decided to part with the picture, Our Lady appeared and said that the Madonna of Perpetual Succour was to be venerated in a church between St. Mary Major's and St. John Lateran's—two of the greatest basilicas in the Eternal City.

In obedience to this request, on the 27th March, 1499, the picture was enshrined in the little church of St. Matthew, in charge of the Augustinian Fathers. There it remained until near the year 1800, when Rome was captured by the French. In the sack of the city the church of St. Matthew was destroyed. The picture, however, was quite safe, but for nearly seventy years was lost to the faithful.

Meanwhile the Redemptorist Fathers established a monastery and church, dedicated to their founder, St. Alphonsus, on the site of the former St. Matthew's. When the picture was discovered it was ordered by Pope Pius IX to be restored to its former place. It is now enshrined over the high altar in the Church of St. Alphonsus, Rome.

From that centre devotion to it has spread throughout the world, and it is safe to say that no other picture of Our Lady is so widely venerated and found in so many Catholic homes.

It is a miraculous picture. Numerous miracles have been worked through the original picture itself; and countless other favours have been granted in all parts of the world through devotion to this picture and to her whom it represents—the Mother of Perpetual Succour.

That in itself is enough to encourage devotion to it. But more than all else is the consoling title—which reminds us that our spiritual Mother, who is no other than the Mother of God Himself, is ever ready to come to the aid of her needy children, especially if we have recourse to her. For no one, says St. Bernard, has ever called on her and gone unaided. If, then, we make use of the following beautiful prayers she will prove herself to be in very truth, Our Mother of Perpetual Succour.

DEVOTIONS TO OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL SUCCOUR

(Prayers on this page to be said on nine consecutive days.)

Say the "Hail Mary" nine times, and then add:

Holy Mary, succour the miserable, help the faint-hearted, cheer those that weep, pray for the people, be the advocate of the clergy, intercede for devout women, and let all feel thine aid who implore thy perpetual succour.

V. Thou hast been made for us, O Lady, a refuge.

R. A helper in need and tribulation.

Let Us Pray

O Almighty and Merciful God, Who hast given us for our veneration the Picture of Thy most Blessed Mother, under the special title of Perpetual Succour, graciously grant that amidst all the changes of our journey through life, we may be so defended by the continual protection of the same Immaculate ever-Virgin Mary, that we may deserve to obtain the rewards of Thy eternal Redemption, Who livest and reignest with God, the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

Mother of Perpetual Succour, pray for us (three times).

ACT OF CONSECRATION

Most Holy Virgin Mary, who to inspire me with the fullest confidence hast been willing to take the sweet name of Mother of Perpetual Succour, I acknowledge that my sins render me unworthy to be admitted among the number of thy privileged children. Nevertheless, desirous of enjoying thy merciful favour, I cast myself at thy feet, and humbly prostrate before thee I consecrate to thee my understanding that I may always think of the love which thou deservest; I consecrate to thee my tongue that I may always make use of it to proclaim thy sublime prerogatives; I consecrate to thee my heart that, after God, I may love thee above all things.

O my Sovereign Lady, deign to receive me among the number of thy favoured children; take me under thy protection; succour me in all my spiritual and temporal wants, but especially at the hour of my death.

O Mother of Perpetual Succour, I know that thou lovest me more than I can love myself. Therefore, I entrust all my interests to thy care. Dispose of me and of all that belongs to me, according to thy good pleasure.

O my Mother, bless me and by thy powerful intercession support my weakness, so that having been faithful in serving thee during this life, I may praise thee, love thee and thank thee eternally in the next. Amen.

O Mary, Mother of Perpetual Succour, pray for me.

ACT OF CONFIDENCE

O Mother of Perpetual Succour, behold me, a miserable sinner, at thy feet. I have recourse to thee and put my trust in thee. O Mother of Mercy have pity on me. I hear thee called by all the refuge and the hope of sinners. Be, then, my refuge and my hope. Succour me for the love of Jesus Christ. Stretch forth thy hand to me, a fallen wretch, who recommend and dedicate myself to thee as thy perpetual servant.

I bless and thank God for having in His mercy given me this confidence in thee—the pledge, I believe, of my eternal salvation. Alas ! too often in past times have I miserably fallen because I had not recourse to thee. I know that with thy help I shall conquer; I know that thou wilt help me if I recommend myself to thee; but I fear, lest in the occasions of falling, I should cease to call upon thee and so should lose my soul.

This, then, is the grace I seek from thee, and I conjure thee as far as I know how and can to obtain it for me: namely, in the assaults of hell always to have recourse to thee and to say to thee—O Mary, help me; Mother of Perpetual Succour, suffer me not to lose my God.

ACT OF LOVE

O Mother of Perpetual Succour, grant that I may always invoke Thy most powerful name, for Thy name is help in life, salvation in death. Ah, Mary most pure, Mary most sweet, let Thy name henceforth be the breath of my life. Tarry not, O Lady, to come to my succour, whenever I call upon thee, for in all the wants which shall befall me, I will never cease to call upon thee, and to repeat again and again, Mary, Mary ! What comfort, what sweetness, what confidence, what tenderness, does my soul feel in the mere mention of thy name, in the very thought of thee! I thank the Lord for having given thee, for my good, this name so sweet, so amiable, so powerful. But merely to pronounce thy name, is not enough for me. I wish to do so out of love; I wish that love may remind me to call thee always, Mother of Perpetual Succour. Amen.

O Mary, Mother of Perpetual Succour, pray for me.

FOR A SPECIAL INTENTION

With the humility and trust of a little child I appeal to thee, O sweet and tender Mother of Perpetual Succour. To thy maternal heart I commit this special intention of mine, namely . . . (mention it). O Mary, my dearest Mother, if it be the Holy Will of God, grant a speedy answer to my prayers, for the love of thy Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

APPENDIX: The League of St. Gerard

The League of St. Gerard was inaugurated at the Redemptorist Monastery, Toronto, Canada. In 1942 it was begun at Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, U.S.A. Its spread in each country was rapid. Under its auspices was established the Catholic Maternity Guild, an auxiliary of Catholic Action. By their contributions members defray the expenses of

child-birth incurred by a family within the group. The Guild now functions in many parishes and many dioceses.

On August 5, 1944, the League was approved by Most Rev. Dr. Gleeson, C.SS.R., D.D., Bishop of Maitland; and on September 17, 1945, by Most Rev. Dr. O'Collins, D.D., Bishop of Ballarat. In October, 1950, it was also begun in Ireland, with headquarters at Dundalk.

Aims of the League

The aims of the League of St. Gerard are as follows:-

1. To make St. Gerard Majella known, loved and invoked as the MOTHERS' SAINT.
2. To win the saint's powerful help for mothers in their responsible task of bearing and rearing children.
3. To combat the evil forces which attack the sanctity of Marriage, the dignity of Motherhood and the integrity of the Family,
4. To restore the full Christian life to every Home.

Privileges of the League

At each League Centre a Mass is said every month for the intentions of members, and local Directors give them a memento in their daily Mass. Moreover, the prayers of all League members are solicited for mothers in time of special need.

Membership of the League

All may join the League, not only mothers but anyone who is interested in the Crusade to save Christian Society.
